

TWO PASSAGES IN AN ARTIST'S LIFE.

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TWO PASSAGES IN AN ARTIST'S LIFE.*

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT.

I.

"CHARITY, signor?"

"My child, I have no change in my purse."

"Oh, signor, charity!"

"I have no money, I tell you;" and saying this, the stranger pushed back the extended hand of a little girl, who stood begging at the corner of the Strada di Toledo, in Naples.

"Well, signor, you shall be repaid," said a voice, the sweetness of which contradicted aught that might seem petulant in the words.

The passenger addressed turned with a smile and with some surprise, and looked at the young mendicant. It was a child about eight years of age, with pretty features, though extremely pale, and the largest black eyes he had ever seen. There was an expression of resolution as well as of sorrow in the juvenile face.

"I shall be repaid!" repeated the stranger. "Do you know that such a reply is impertinent?"

"Pardon, signor; give me what you will, but give me something; for I want a great deal of money."

The respectful, yet earnest air of entreaty with which this reply was made, interested the passenger. He stopped and took out his purse; but while searching for a piece of silver, asked—

"Why, my girl, do you want a great deal? At your age, one is usually content with a little."

"Oh, I need much," answered the child, with tears in her eyes. "I have to make up a large sum, and have raised but a very small part."

This is doubtless a victim of selfish parents, thought the stranger, as he put his alms into her hand. She dares not return home without the amount they have ordered her to bring. What a pity! How delicate are those features, and what a touching expression! How expressive the tones of her childish voice! She deserves a better fate, truly, than thus to be nursed by misery and brought up, perhaps, to vice!

The little girl thanked him, and invoked the blessing of the Madonna for his goodness; then turned to other passengers, while he slowly went on.

The next afternoon, towards sunset, the stranger, a young painter and native of France, whom we shall call Albert Monier, escorted a party of ladies to their locanda after a sailing excursion, and chanced to pass the piazza where stood the little

* The incident in the first part of this little tale, of the child begging for her mother's burial, is taken from a French story—altogether different, however, in the remaining incidents, and not at all suitable for translation.

beggar girl. He pointed her out to their attention, and related his encounter of the preceding day. Two of the ladies, resolute never to encourage idleness, passed without noticing her; and the child, who seemed by instinct to know the really benevolent, made no attempt to stop them. But when an English lady drew nigh, leaning on the arm of Monier, both her hands were stretched out in the energy of supplication.

"Are you getting so much money for yourself?" asked the lady, in a sweet voice. Albert translated her words into the Neapolitan dialect. The little girl shook her head, and answered ingenuously—

"It is for my mother."

"And who is the mother that sends you, poor, timid child, to beg in the crowded streets?"

"My mother?—she is *there*!" answered the child, pointing upwards.

"She is dead—poor orphan! And your father?"

"I know not where he is. Perhaps with mamma," replied the little girl, sadly.

The lady shed tears, and gave her a piece of gold. Albert questioned her as to her birth and residence, but could learn no more than that her only protector was Father Anselmo, priest of the church of San Paolo, in one of the faubourgs. Her name was Lucilla. She knew of no family name.

Deeply interested in the fate of the poor child, he resolved to visit the padre, and, some hours after, directed his steps towards the faubourg indicated. Passing through noble streets, where palaces, the abodes of splendour and ostentation, greeted him at every step, through narrow and dirty alleys, where dwelt vice and misery, and observing the contrast which strikes every visitor to the Italian cities, he at last found the church and the lodging of Anselmo. At his ring, the sacristan opened the door, and directed him to walk up a narrow flight of stairs, at the top of which was the priest's chamber.

The old curate was a venerable man, with an open, honest face and mild expression. His snow-white hair fell over the collar of a black robe always worn by the priests in Italy. His apartment was so modestly furnished, that it might have served for the cell of a friar; it contained only a table, a bed, four chairs, a portrait of Napoleon, and an image or two consecrated to devotion.

As he entered, Albert saw that the good old priest was not alone. A little girl sat by the table, finishing her supper of milk and coarse bread; it was Lucilla, who turned quickly as the door opened, and showed by the flashing of her dark eyes that she recognized the young stranger.

Albert took the seat offered him by the padre, explained the object of his visit, and expressed his wish to do something for the benefit of the poor child, who, he added, "is degraded by thus begging in the streets."

"That is what I tell her every day," observed Anselmo.

Lucilla, having saluted Albert, returned to her repast, without paying further attention, as it seemed, to their conversation. In answer to some inquiries concerning her parentage, the priest volunteered to relate what he knew of her mother.

"Some years ago," said he, "I noticed a young woman who was a regular attendant on divine service in the church where I officiate. Her little daughter was always with her, and both would often remain for hours kneeling before the chapel of the Madonna.

"One day there was a funeral ceremony in the church. The rich Count of Cosenza had died at his hotel, and his remains were to be interred in the family vault within the chapel. The whole church was hung with black cloth fringed with silver. An immense number of wax lights burned under the funereal canopy that overhung the coffin, while the candelabras, with red and blue flames, gave a dazzling splendour to the illuminated chapel. The arms of the deceased were displayed on his gilded escutcheon. A great crowd from the neighbourhood and from a distance came to San Paolo to witness the pompous spectacle.

"After the mass and prayers for the dead were ended, the body of the noble count was deposited in the chapel of the Madonna, till the vault belonging to his family could be opened. Among the people in the church were the lovely mother and her child. She had sung in the funeral chant, and remained absorbed in sad meditation, while the lights were extinguished and the crowd dispersed.

"Lucilla stood close by her mother, astonished and dazzled by the spectacle which had so powerfully impressed her youthful imagination. Nursed in the Italian belief that clings so fondly to what takes strong hold on the senses, the child imagined that he who could, after his death, command such sumptuous honours, and prayers offered with so much pomp of worship, must be sure of a happy entrance into heaven. "How beautiful, O mamma!" she cried, breathlessly. "The Madonna blesses those who are brought in such a manner into her chapel!" Then she addressed to her mother a number of questions, to know how long before the body would be interred; if the priests of San Paolo would come to pray over it every day; if they would sprinkle it with holy water; how many masses would be said for the repose of the departed soul, &c.

"I happened to be near, and congratulated the mother upon the religious feelings she had been enabled to cherish in her child—expressing my hopes that her fervent prayers would one day be granted. She made no reply, but only pressed a kiss on her daughter's forehead; tears seemed to

choke her voice, and she hastily quitted the church, probably to conceal her emotion from me. I remarked, as she passed to the door, that she was even paler than usual, and seemed to be suffering much.

"A whole month passed, during which I saw her no more in the church of San Paolo. I concluded that some misfortune had obliged her to quit the country, when, one morning, the little Lucilla came and knocked at my door. She had been weeping, and had quite lost the usual freshness of her complexion. Her dress was in disorder; and she had hardly breath enough to speak as she entreated me to hasten to the help of her mother, who was dying.

"I followed her at once to a small house in one of the neighbouring streets. The chamber into which I was led by the little girl, showed the aspect of poverty, but was by no means lacking in neatness. Her poor mother's condition was, indeed, desperate. When I first glanced at her livid countenance, I saw that her last hour had come.

"My first care was to summon a physician. He paid but a short visit—for a brief examination of the invalid convinced him she was beyond human aid. 'She has not an hour to live,' he whispered to me, as he went out. The dying woman continually murmured the name of her child. When I promised to take care of the orphan, she blessed me, and prayed that God would enable me to fulfil the pious duty. Then pointing to a casket that stood by her bed, she gave into my hands a bundle of papers, most of them letters from the father of Lucilla.

"The tears and cries of the desolate orphan mingled with her mother's last sighs. I consigned her to the care of the sacristan's wife, while I made preparations for the burial of the poor young woman. Lucilla entreated permission to be present at the simple funeral ceremony, and then followed the bier to the cemetery where the poor were interred. As the assistants were about lowering the corpse into the ground, the child threw herself upon it with piercing cries, insisting that it should be carried to the chapel of the Madonna.

"I endeavoured to calm her distress, and explained to her that to inter the body within the church would cost an enormous sum, such as neither she nor I possessed. Wiping away her tears, she asked—'How much would it cost to place my mother near the Madonna?'—for she seemed to think there was no safety for her mother's soul if the body were buried elsewhere.

"I could not make her understand the value of any stated sum, but I showed her a piece of gold, and said it would take at least an hundred like that. From that moment the child devoted herself to fulfil the resolution she had formed to raise the sum required. She commenced begging next morning on the steps of the church, and then passed into the more frequented streets. Every evening she brings me what she has obtained, and when there is enough to make a ducat, begs me to

have it changed into gold, that she may see it added to the others. All she can procure is hoarded up, that in time she may see her mother's remains laid beside the altar of the Madonna, her tomb sprinkled with holy water and incense burned over it.

"To-day Lucilla is happy, for she has brought home the value of a golden ducat. There are now eighteen ducats in her treasury; when she has eighty-two more, the dear child will see her pious wish fulfilled, and the parent she loved so much under the Holy Virgin's protection.

"I ought, perhaps, to have prevented all this; but I had no power to oppose her resolution, from the weakness, it may be called, of admiration; and besides, I knew not if I should do right in withholding so holy a purpose."

The story of Anselmo touched the heart of the young Frenchman. So much courage and perseverance evinced by so young a child, to secure, as she believed, her mother's eternal happiness, appeared to him an example of filial piety such as he had never heard of even in Naples, where religion is so highly regarded by the people. After having thanked the good priest for his relation, he begged that he would no longer permit Lucilla to ask charity in the streets, for that he would take care to see her wish fulfilled before he left the city.

"I am an artist," said he, "and have little property, but I shall not regret the loss of what is bestowed in such a cause, and to make happy an innocent heart. You will do me a favour if you will attend to the preparations for the funeral ceremonies."

Anselmo, surprised at such generosity from a stranger, was profuse in his expressions of gratitude; but Albert stopped him, and asked if what he knew respecting the parentage of Lucilla could avail for the bettering of her condition. Alas! hers was but an ordinary case; her mother had been abandoned by the wretch who had betrayed her, with a promise of support for her and the child, which was only fulfilled for two or three years. The priest believed she had wished to conceal his name, and therefore did not feel himself justified in communicating it. He was resolved never to part with the little girl, to whom he had promised to be a father.

The following day, the bells of the church of San Paolo were ringing, and the people of the neighbourhood crowded within the gates to attend the funeral service of the mother of Lucilla. Magnificent and solemn music sounded from the choir. All the pillars were hung with black cloth fringed with silver. A superb canopied bier, surrounded by wax lights, stood in front of the great altar. The curate Anselmo, assisted by other priests and deacons, officiated with all the pomp of Catholic worship. The fragrance of incense filled the aisles. The choir responded to the priests chanting the prayers for the repose of the dead.

When the sacrifice of the mass was ended, six men in black took up the coffin, covered with black cloth, on which was a white cross embroidered in

silver, and, accompanied by the priests, the singers, and the children of the choir, still chanting prayers for the dead, bore it to the altar of the Madonna, which also had been sumptuously decorated for the solemnity. When they opened the vault that was to receive the body, and Anselmo began to chant the "De profundis clamavi," Lucilla, who was kneeling, lifted up her face with an expression of ecstatic joy, and murmured a prayer of gratitude. Then she rose, and piously kissed the coffin before it was consigned to its last resting-place.

The ceremony being finished, the stone covering was replaced; the priests chanted the requiem, and returned to the sacristy. The people left the church. Lucilla came timidly to her benefactor, and presented him with her prayer-book.

"Madonna will bless you, signor," said she, "for you have given repose to the soul of my mother! I have nothing to give you but her prayer-book."

Albert took the simple gift. It was bound in violet-coloured morocco, and on the side was printed, in letters of gold—"Caterina Micaeli."

"It is my mother's name," said the little girl. The painter promised never to part with the relic. Having given to Anselmo a sum of money, which he desired him to expend in procuring Lucilla a useful education, he left them; and a few days after, quitted Naples to pursue his travels.

II.

THE curtain had just fallen after the third act of a play represented at the Parisian theatre. After the silence that immediately succeeded among the crowd of spectators, the hum of conversation was heard throughout the house.

"That last scene was admirable," observed a man who sat in a side box, to his companion, a painter of some celebrity; "but you, I perceive, have been busy with some drama before the curtain. Indeed, I have not seen you, for the last half hour, take your eyes off yonder box."

"She is, in truth, singularly beautiful," answered the other.

"Who, the young lady there, with her stern-looking old father? Ah! you have taste, Albert. It is Mademoiselle Julie d'Auberg, daughter to the rich old colonel."

It was, indeed, a vision of loveliness. The young girl was apparently absorbed in the representation; and the artless expression of pleasure in her face, as she looked up at her father, or turned to speak with a lady in the same box, showed all the naivete of childhood. Her form was slender, but exquisitely moulded; her neck and bust, and white rounded arms, had the faultless perfection of statuary, with the softness and glowing life of the richest creation of the pencil. But even more attractive than the beauty of her classic brow and chiseled features, was an expression of tender

melancholy in the soft dark eyes, shaded by lashes so long that they rested on her cheek. When the curtain rose, and she fixed them again on the stage, the painter thought he could read in their tremulous glances all the emotions called up by the pictured scene. Presently, she made a slight change in her position, which deprived him of the full view of her face.

When the piece was concluded, and the audience left the house, the artist and his friend stood almost involuntarily in the way where the young girl they had noticed, with her party, must pass them. Her glance, as she passed, met the ardent look of the painter; and for one delicious instant those dark eyes rested on his. There was something of surprise as if at his boldness; but the glance lingered—lingered till her companion drew her forward—and it forever enslaved the artist's soul. Does not the magnetic power that often lies in a look, prove that there is a communion of spirit independent of outward speech?

Albert Monier went home, haunted by those thrilling eyes. Again and again it was his fortune to encounter the possessor; once in leaving the church of St. —, when he rushed to her assistance as she slipped on the marble pavement; once at a ball given by the Duchesse de B. There he saw her surrounded by her equals in rank, the idol of their admiration; while he was but admitted into that lordly circle as an humble acquaintance—as one whose talents and fame might reflect some lustre on his patrons; whose conversation on art might instruct or amuse aristocratic connoisseurs. He felt as though this species of traffic were a base barter of the gifts of art, as far nobler than those of fortune as the true diamond is superior to the tinsel that mocks its brilliancy. He despised himself that he could consent to occupy, even in appearance, the situation of a dependant. Thus embittered with self-reproach, he turned almost rudely from one or two young noblemen desirous of entering into conversation with him, and was about to take his departure, when her figure passed him in the graceful measures of the dance, and he met once more the eyes of Julie d'Auberg. He fancied, perhaps dreamed, that she smiled upon him, and stood rooted to the spot. She seemed then a being of a higher sphere, too pure, too fair for contact with aught mortal. Yet why could he not enjoy the same privilege with any one of the frivolous crowd about her of seeing those eyes sparkle in conversation—or listening to the melody of her voice? Should he seek the honour of being presented to her!—to be regarded as an intruder among the noble claimants of her smiles? So gentle a creature would not repulse him harshly, but there would be in her high-bred air a calm consciousness of that superiority which man is least willing to acknowledge, because it depends on the accident of birth. "I shall be still the humble artist—she the proud daughter of wealth and rank!" thought he; and with more bitterness in his heart than he could own to himself was reasonable, he quitted abruptly the scene of festivity.

Some days afterwards, Monier was surprised by a visit in his studio from Colonel d'Auberg, and an inquiry if he would honour him by painting a portrait of his daughter. Was it the singular deference and politeness with which the request was made, that caused the artist's heart to throb and his eyes to flash? The first sitting was appointed for the next day.

The sitting took place. In the subdued light of the studio, and the fancy dress she wore for the picture, Julie was more beautiful than ever. But her father accompanied her, and his presence troubled the joy of the painter. He could, indeed, gaze unreproved on the idol of his fancy; he could sometimes converse with her; but the extreme reserve of her manner, and the grave, proud air always preserved by Colonel d'Auberg, convinced him that he was in their eyes only the skilful painter—the inferior employed for gold. A sharp pang contracted his heart, and at the moment pride set him free from the thralldom of imagination.

"This is a singular relic," said the colonel, one day while his daughter was sitting, taking up at the same time a fragment of ancient sculpture from the table. Monier informed him it had been dug up among some ruins at Rome; and the mention of those fallen monuments of greatness, and the more enduring monuments of art, of which he spoke with melancholy admiration, caused him to forget his own uneasy feelings. Colonel d'Auberg showed in the subject all the interest of an amateur, and questioned him of the *chef d'œuvres* he had seen in the different cities of Italy, while Julie listened with pleased attention. From works of art the discourse passed to personal adventures; and many a stirring scene did the artist describe, glad to find some exciting subject of conversation. Among the incidents of several years travel, he did not fail to relate the touching story of Lucilla, the beggar girl. Pride forbade the mention of his own generosity, though he spoke of his visit to the priest, and enlarged upon the pious devotedness of the interesting child.

"Your picture is really a splendid one," said one of his friends, one day, when it was near its completion. "What an innocent and lovely face. Pity it should belong to one who, I learn, is accomplished in coquetry."

"Impossible!"

"Truth! Has she not encouraged the pretensions of Count — to her favour? And now she has cast him off, and is to wed the Marquis de —."

Monier turned pale. "Impossible!" he repeated.

"Why, my dear fellow, did you not know the portrait was intended as a gift to her affianced?"

The artist compressed his lips, that he might keep down the agony that rent his bosom. What was it to him that she was to wed another? Could he ever hope she would stoop to him? No—but in the past, happy hours, when he gazed on those matchless features, more than once had he poured

forth his soul in burning looks, and hers did not seem to chide them! The thought had passed into his heart of hearts, that had he wealth and a name, she would not have disdained his suit. Yet—was she then, really, a coquette?

The next day was the last sitting; but the painter found himself unequal to the task. His hand trembled—his brain whirled. Colonel d'Auberg kindly noticed his evident indisposition, and begged him to desist from labour, though he hinted that he would be gratified by having the picture finished in three days. "It shall be done!" cried Monier, abruptly; and his visitors departed. The artist reproached himself till he had wrought up his spirit to contempt for all the world, and ceased not working till the beautiful creation of his art looked forth from the canvas almost a living copy of the original.

The next afternoon, Monier himself accompanied his picture to the residence of Colonel d'Auberg. His hotel was in the Rue Saint Dominique, between a wide court and a magnificent garden. This secluded situation commanded a silence and calm almost monastic. The artist's entrance into the spacious court soothed his mind, and at the same time impressed him with a feeling of the difference in life between himself and her he so madly loved.

On the first floor of this splendid dwelling was a small apartment, a kind of boudoir, with windows opening on the garden, and perfumed with the fragrance of roses and jessamines. A rich carpet covered the floor, and cushions of crimson velvet, ornamented with golden tassels, were thrown about in sumptuous disorder. In the corner, a marble stand supported a vase full of flowers. Near the window sat the beautiful Julie, in a simple but elegant dress, and leaning her head pensively on her hand. She was alone; she rose to receive the artist, and expressed pleasure that his work was so soon completed.

Monier placed his picture in a proper light, and some conversation grew out of the remarks on its finish and the likeness. Julie was so cordial, so graceful, so kind, that the artist was more and more emboldened.

"I have one favour," he said, at length, hesitatingly, "to ask, which may seem too bold."

"What is it?" asked Julie, looking at him with her clear, earnest eyes.

"That I might be permitted to take a copy of this picture."

Julie looked surprised. "For whom?" she asked.

"For myself!" answered the painter, boldly. "I am about to leave Paris, and would fain carry with me a memorial of the only happy hours whose remembrance I wish to cherish."

His tone and looks, as he said this, spoke all his heart. He saw the eloquent blood rush to the face of Julie, giving evidence that she had understood him; then, as the crimson flush receded, she resumed her self-possession, and coldly replied that she knew her father would not permit the portrait to be copied. The artist hurried from her presence,

with a heart full of anguish. It was but too plain that she scorned him; the very thought of his love was an offence to her. The worship of a heart that knew how to appreciate the best and noblest, because that heart beat in the bosom of a commoner, was in her eyes a presumption not to be forgiven! And he must go forth thus repelled, from the presence of the only being he could ever love—to wear her image in his soul forever; to adore her the more deeply, because, in her haughtiness, she seemed more lovely than ever.

Full of indignation against himself that he had thus yielded to the mastery of such feelings, yet unable to regret that he had left with Julie the knowledge of his passion, Albert Monier wandered alone for hours, through remote parts of the city, seeking in continual motion some relief from his mental suffering. It was late when he returned home. That night was sleepless; and the following day was passed in preparations for the commencement of his travels.

It was near sunset, when a servant in rich livery presented him with a note, directed in a female hand. It contained simply a request that he would follow the bearer to the house of the Marquise de

Monier started—it was the name of the betrothed of Julie d'Auberg! Was she then already married?—or was this the mother of her bridegroom? Not without agitation, after some change in his dress, he followed the messenger.

He was conducted to the hotel of the Marquise, and into a splendidly furnished drawing-room, where he was left a few minutes alone. Then a stately lady, but little past the prime of life, appeared, and welcomed him with apparent cordiality.

The artist now felt no embarrassment, for he was certain he had been summoned merely on professional business. But when the lady presented him with a small box, bade him examine a ring it contained, and he saw engraved on the inside the name of "Caterina Micaeli," his indifference passed into surprise and wonder.

"That ring," said the lady, in a soft voice, "is the only relic of her mother, possessed by a young orphan in whom I feel great interest. You, M. Monier, know something of her history."

The painter briefly related the little he knew.

"This orphan," resumed the lady, "has found a home and friends; but she cannot be happy till she has acknowledged her obligations to her early benefactor. You, monsieur, gave not only repose, as she believed, to her mother's soul, but you furnished the daughter with the means of education."

Albert would have disclaimed the praise, but the lady continued—

"She has seen her mother's prayer-book in your hands. She recognized in you the noble being who gave her aid; she would give you in return all she has to bestow. In a word, Lucilla loves you!"

The artist started and turned deadly pale.

"Not a word," cried the Marquise; "not a

word till you have seen her. I will not have my protégée refused."

Crossing the room, she threw open a wide door at the further end, and the astonished Monier could hardly believe the evidence of his senses, when he saw advance—Julie d'Auberg, leaning on the arm of her father!

"We will have no further masquerading," cried the Marquise. "Julie is the orphan so dear to me. Julie is your Lucilla—the Neapolitan beggar girl."

"I refused you permission, monsieur, to copy my portrait," said the lovely girl, in blushing embarrassment; "will you refuse the original?"

Monier glanced from one to another in utter bewilderment; but he could not doubt the reality of his happiness; and sinking on his knee, he pressed to his lips the hand of his adored Julie.

A few words from the Marquise made all clear. She explained how the good Father Anselmo, feeling his last hour approaching, had written to Colonel d'Auberg, as a last resource, to claim his protection for his unfortunate child; how Colonel d'Auberg, childless and lonely in his declining age, received the news with joy, and determined to in-

roduce his neglected daughter into the world as his heiress; how he had entreated the assistance of the Marquise, and entrusted to her the care of the young girl's education. She explained, also, how the artless Julie, having discovered, by the accident of seeing her mother's prayer-book in Monier's hands at the church of St. —, that he was the benefactor of her childhood, had conceived a regard for him which further acquaintance only confirmed and strengthened; how she had confided her thoughts and feelings to her adopted mother, who had secured her father's consent that his daughter should please herself alone in the choice of a husband.

"She deserves this, at least, at my hands," said the self-reproaching parent; and thus, while the suit of nobles met with repulse, the beautiful Julie had given her heart's devotion to the comparatively humble artist.

In a few days after the marriage was celebrated, and also that of the young marquis, who had long been betrothed to the niece of the *Duc de —*. The Marquise presided, like a happy mother, over both the aristocratic and the humbler nuptials.

VISITS TO THE PAINTERS.

AN AMATEUR

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VISITS TO THE PAINTERS.

BY AN AMATEUR.

It is pleasant on a leisure afternoon to roam about town and lounge for half an hour in each of the painters' studios; to watch the progress of those delightful creations of genius which are destined to adorn the saloons of the fashionable and the galleries of the tasteful lovers of art, of whom, thank Heaven, there are a few left in these latter days of dulness and dollars.

We frequently surprise Rothermel with his charcoal or chalk in hand, striking out those masterly studies of Spanish figures, which are to be introduced into his great historical painting of "*Cortes before Mexico*." There is Alvarado, leaning on the spear with which he took his immortal leap, the *Salto d'Alvarado*, on the "melancholy night" of the retreat from Montezuma's capital. There is the "ever composed" and heroic Sandoval, gazing on the newly-discovered city where he is destined to gain an undying fame; and that figure seated on the ground, a little weary with the weight of his armoir, may be old Bernal Diaz himself, meditating a chapter of his "*True History of the Conquest*,"—quaint, ingenuous old Bernal Diaz, who was not ashamed to confess that he was very often horribly frightened, expecting every moment to be taken and minced up and eaten by those villainous heathen savages, or to have his heart torn out and laid on the altars of their execrable idols; and he believed, moreover, that the rest were as much frightened as himself, notwithstanding all their boasting.

Rothermel seems to have a penchant for the heroic age of our western world—for we have had our age of chivalry as well as Europe. Columbus and Cortes and Soto, Rothermel's favourites, were all belted knights in their time—and knights errant, too, for they wandered further in quest of adventures than even the Crusaders.

Sometimes Rothermel takes up the revolutionary period, and it is darkly intimated that he has more than one subject on his easel which the engraver will have the pleasure of introducing some day to the readers of the *Lady's Book*. This will be a treat of no ordinary character, we promise them.

Sully confines his pencil chiefly to portraits, in which department he has long held pre-eminence. When we call upon him, we stop a few moments in the ante-room to admire the sketches and studies which adorn its walls. Then we tap gently at the door of the grand painting hall, with its almost Rembrantish light. The smiling face of the everurbane and good-natured man of genius appears, and we are welcomed to the studio, saving and ex-

cepting when the great arm-chair is occupied by a sister. Here we see the progress of that splendid portrait of Miss Leslie, and that smiling group of children, both of which are "being painted,"—as the Grammar King would say,—"being painted" for the *Lady's Book*. We wish Sully would paint grand historical subjects oftener; and considering the great popularity of his "*Washington Crossing the Delaware*," it is really surprising that he has not. He set a noble example in that picture, which our American artists would do well to imitate more frequently. There is a fine historical portrait of Decatur by Sully, which might serve as a model for pictures of naval and military heroes. His late equestrian portrait of Washington belongs to the same class. It is a magnificent affair, and ought to be bought, at a princely price, and placed in some state capitol or in the legislative halls, or the President's mansion at the seat of government of the United States. Sully, as all the world knows, paints exquisitely beautiful portraits of ladies. His praise is in all the parlours.

Croome is engaged on historical subjects. He is now drawing subjects from Egyptian, Grecian and Roman history, for the forthcoming Pictorial History of the World of Professor Frost. His pencil is one of the most prolific in our country, and the large number of his designs which appear in books have rendered his name familiar to some millions of people, who will never have the pleasure, like ourselves, of lounging in his studio and seeing how deftly he handles that delicate pencil which seems equally at ease upon a pyramid or upon a peach. He has just finished, by the way, a fruit piece for the all-grasping Godey, who lays every good artist he can catch under contribution.

One must find his way down to the Mansion House in order to see Freeman at work. He paints miniatures of queens and dukes and presidents. His finish is like enamel; his likenesses are astounding. You expect every moment to see the lips move and say, "How d'ye do?" the features of your friends are so marvellously like. His reputation is so splendid that the *Lady's Book* must have him. One of his miniatures is already in Armstrong's hand and will soon appear.

Are you fond of the grand and terrible, the dashing and picturesque in effect, step with me into Hamilton's studio. That river view, with the battle and a ship exploding with a mighty crash, is the storming of Fort Mifflin. It is painted by way of a battle-ground picture for Godey. So is its companion—the Ruins of Red-Bank. This is a fine counterpart to the other—this tranquil, woody

scene, with the crumbling walls and the lone monument to poor Count Donop's memory.

When the weather is fine, we sometimes drive out to Milestown and visit that prince of landscape painters, Russell Smith. His residence, "bosomed high in tufted trees," is a gem of art itself—a perfect artist's cottage, with picturesque views in every direction, and a little world of romantic beauty within the enclosure of his park walls. What a pleasure to visit him and tumble over those inexhaustible portfolios of sketches, painted under

every aspect of the heavens in every region of our country. And then it is so pleasant to hear the modest, but profoundly learned and tasteful remarks of the artist as he turns them over. It is a great treat to visit Russell Smith's studio. Before he was monopolized by the State of Virginia to paint the historical scenes of the ancient dominion, Godey used to take us out to his residence once a week; and then it was that he secured those battle-ground views which are destined to adorn the *Lady's Book*.

DROWNE'S WOODEN IMAGE.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book (1844-1848); Jul 1844; 29, American Periodicals
pg. 13

D R O W N E ' S W O O D E N I M A G E .

BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, AUTHOR OF "TWICE TOLD TALES," ETC.

ONE sunshiny morning, in the good old times of the town of Boston, a young carver in wood, well known by the name of Drowne, stood contemplating a large oaken log, which it was his purpose to convert into the figure-head of a vessel. And while he discussed within his own mind what sort of shape or similitude it were well to bestow upon this excellent piece of timber, there came into Drowne's workshop a certain Captain Hunnewell, owner and commander of the good brig called the *Cynosure*, which had just returned from her first voyage to Fayal.

"Ah! that will do, Drowne, that will do!" cried the jolly captain, tapping the log with his rattan. "I bespeak this very piece of oak for the figure-head of the *Cynosure*. She has shown herself the sweetest craft that ever floated, and I mean to decorate her prow with the handsomest image that the skill of man can cut out of timber. And, Drowne, you are the very fellow to execute it."

"You give me more credit than I deserve, Captain Hunnewell," said the carver, modestly, yet as one conscious of eminence in his art. "But, for the sake of the good brig, I stand ready to do my best. And which of these designs would you prefer? Here"—pointing to a staring, half-length figure, in a white wig and a scarlet coat—"here is an excellent model, the likeness of our gracious king. Here is the valiant Admiral Vernon. Or, if you prefer a female figure, what say you to Britannia with the trident?"

"All very fine, Drowne; all very fine," answered the mariner. "But as nothing like the brig ever swam the ocean, so I am determined she shall have such a figure-head as old Neptune never saw in his life. And what is more, as there is a secret in the matter, you must pledge your credit not to betray it."

"Certainly," said Drowne, marvelling, however, what possible mystery there could be in reference to an affair so open, of necessity, to the inspection of all the world, as the figure-head of a vessel. "You may depend, captain, on my being as secret as the nature of the case will permit."

Captain Hunnewell then took Drowne by the button, and communicated his wishes in so low a tone, that it would be 'unmannerly to repeat what was evidently intended for the carver's private ear. We shall, therefore, take the opportunity to give the reader a few desirable particulars about Drowne himself.

He was the first American who is known to have attempted,—in a very humble line, it is true,—that art in which we can now reckon so many names

already distinguished, or rising to distinction. From his earliest boyhood, he had exhibited a knack—for it would be too proud a word to call it genius—a knack, therefore, for the imitation of the human figure, in whatever material came most readily to hand. The snows of a New England winter had often supplied him with a species of marble as dazzlingly white, at least, as the Parian or the Carrera, and if less durable, yet sufficiently so to correspond with any claims to permanent existence possessed by the boy's frozen statues. Yet they won admiration from maturer judges than his schoolfellows, and were indeed, remarkably clever, though destitute of the native warmth that might have made the snow melt beneath his hand. As he advanced in life, the young man adopted pine and oak as eligible materials for the display of his skill, which now began to bring him a return of solid silver, as well as the empty praise that had been an apt reward enough for his productions of evanescent snow. He became noted for carving ornamental pump-heads, and wooden urns for gate-posts, and decorations, more grotesque than fanciful, for mantel-pieces. No apothecary would have deemed himself in the way of obtaining custom, without setting up a gilded mortar, if not a head of Galen or Hippocrates, from the skilful hand of Drowne. But the great scope of his business lay in the manufacture of figure-heads for vessels. Whether it were the monarch himself, or some famous British admiral or general, or the governor of the province, or perchance the favourite daughter of the ship-owner, there the image stood above the prow, decked out in gorgeous colours, magnificently gilded, and staring the whole world out of countenance, as if from an innate consciousness of its own superiority. These specimens of native sculpture had crossed the sea in all directions, and been not ignobly noticed among the crowded shipping of the Thames, and wherever else the hardy mariners of New England had pushed their adventures. It must be confessed, that a family likeness pervaded these respectable progeny of Drowne's skill—that the benign countenance of the king resembled those of his subjects, and that Miss Peggy Hobart, the merchant's daughter, bore a remarkable similitude to Britannia, Victory, and other ladies of the allegoric sisterhood; and, finally, that they all had a kind of wooden aspect, which proved an intimate relationship with the unshaped blocks of timber in the carver's workshop. But, at least, there was no inconsiderable skill of hand, nor a deficiency of any attribute to render them really works of art, except that deep quality, be it of soul

or intellect, which bestows life upon the lifeless, and warmth upon the cold, and which, had it been present, would have made Drowne's wooden workmanship instinct with spirit.

The captain of the *Cynosure* had now finished his instructions.

"And Drowne," said he, impressively, "you must lay aside all other business, and set about this forthwith. And as to the price, only do the job in first rate style, and you shall settle that point yourself."

"Very well, captain," answered the carver, who looked grave and somewhat perplexed, yet had a sort of smile upon his visage. "Depend upon it, I'll do my utmost to satisfy you."

From that morning, the men of taste about Long Wharf and the Tower Dock, who were wont to show their love for the arts by frequent visits to Drowne's workshop, and admiration of his wooden images, began to be sensible of a mystery in the carver's conduct. Often he was absent in the day time. Sometimes, as might be judged by gleams of light from the shop windows, he was at work until a late hour of the evening; although neither knock nor voice, on such occasions, could gain admittance for a visitor, or elicit any word of response. Nothing remarkable, however, was observed in the shop at those hours when it was thrown open. A fine piece of timber, indeed, which Drowne was known to have reserved for some work of especial dignity, was seen to be gradually assuming shape. What shape it was destined ultimately to take, was a problem to his friends, and point on which the carver himself preserved a rigid silence. But day after day, though Drowne was seldom noticed in the fact of working upon it, this rude form began to be developed, until it became evident to all observers, that a female figure was growing into mimic life. At each new visit they beheld a larger pile of wooden chips, and a nearer approximation to something beautiful. It seemed as if the hamadryad of the oak had sheltered herself from the unimaginative world within the heart of her native tree, and that it was only necessary to remove the strange shapelessness that had incrusted her, and reveal the grace and loveliness of a divinity. Imperfect as the design, the attitude, the costume, and especially the face of the image, still remained, there was already an effect that drew the eye from the wooden cleverness of Drowne's earlier productions, and fixed it upon the tantalizing mystery of this new project.

Copley, the celebrated painter, then a young man, and a resident of Boston, came one day to visit Drowne; for he had recognized so much of moderate ability in the carver, as to induce him, in the dearth of any professional sympathy, to cultivate his acquaintance. On entering the shop, the artist glanced at the inflexible images of king, commander, dame, and allegory, that stood around; on the best of which might have been bestowed the questionable praise, that it looked as if a living man had here been changed to wood, and that not

only the physical, but the intellectual and spiritual part, partook of the stolid transformation. But in not a single instance did it seem, as if the wood were imbibing the ethereal essence of humanity. What a wide distinction is here, and how far would the slightest portion of the latter merit have out-valued the utmost degree of the former!

"My friend Drowne," said Copley, smiling to himself, but alluding to the mechanical and wooden cleverness that so invariably distinguished the images, "you are really a remarkable person! I have seldom met with a man, in your line of business, that could do so much; for one other touch might make this figure of General Wolfe, for instance, a breathing and intelligent human creature."

"You would have me think that you are praising me highly, Mr. Copley," answered Drowne, turning his back upon Wolfe's image in apparent disgust. "But there has come a light into my mind. I know, what you know as well, that the one touch, which you speak of as deficient, is the only one that would be truly valuable, and that, without it, these works of mine are no better than worthless abortions. There is the same difference between them and the works of an inspired artist, as between a sign post daub and one of your best pictures."

"This is strange!" cried Copley, looking him in the face, which now, as the painter fancied, had a singular depth of intelligence, though, hitherto, it had not given him greatly the advantage over his own family of wooden images. "What has come over you? How is it that, possessing the idea which you have now uttered, you should produce only such works as these?"

The carver smiled, but made no reply. Copley turned again to the images, conceiving that the sense of deficiency, so rare in a merely mechanical character, must surely imply a genius, the tokens of which had been overlooked. But no; there was not a trace of it. He was about to withdraw, when his eyes chanced to fall upon a half-developed figure which lay in a corner of the workshop, surrounded by scattered chips of oak. It arrested him at once.

"What is here? Who has done this?" he broke out, after contemplating it in speechless astonishment for an instant. "Here is the divine, the life-giving touch! What inspired hand is beckoning this wood to arise and live? Whose work is this?"

"No man's work," replied Drowne. "The figure lies within that block of oak, and it is my business to find it."

"Drowne," said the true artist, grasping the carver fervently by the hand, "you are a man of genius!"

As Copley departed, happening to glance backward from the threshold, he beheld Drowne bending over the half created shape, and stretching forth his arms as if he would have embraced and drawn it to his heart; while, had such a miracle been possible, his countenance expressed passion enough to communicate warmth and sensibility to the lifeless oak.

"Strange enough!" said the artist to himself. "Who would have looked for a modern Pygmalion in the person of a Yankee mechanic!"

As yet, the image was but vague in its outward presentment; so that, as in the cloud-shapes around the western sun, the observer rather felt, or was led to imagine, than really saw what was intended by it. Day by day, however, the work assumed greater precision, and settled its irregular and misty outline into distincter grace and beauty. The general design was now obvious to the common eye. It was a female figure, in what appeared to be a foreign dress; the gown being laced over the bosom, and opening in front, so as to disclose a skirt or petticoat, the folds and inequalities of which were admirably represented in the oaken substance. She wore a hat of singular gracefulness, and abundantly laden with flowers, such as never grew in the rude soil of New England, but which, with all their fanciful luxuriance, had a natural truth that it seemed impossible for the most fertile imagination to have attained without copying from real prototypes. There were several little appendages to this dress, such as a fan, a pair of ear-rings, a chain about the neck, a watch in the bosom, and a ring upon the finger, all of which would have been deemed beneath the dignity of sculpture. They were put on, however, with as much taste as a lovely woman might have shown in her attire, and could therefore have shocked none but a judgment spoiled by artistic rules.

The face was still imperfect; but, gradually, by a magic touch, intelligence and sensibility brightened through the features, with all the effect of light gleaming forth from within the solid oak. The face became alive. It was a beautiful, though not precisely regular, and somewhat haughty aspect, but with a certain piquancy about the eyes and mouth which, of all expressions, would have seemed the most impossible to throw over a wooden countenance. And now, so far as carving went, this wonderful production was complete.

"Drowne," said Copley, who had hardly missed a single day in his visits to the carver's workshop, "if this work were in marble, it would make you famous at once; nay, I would almost affirm that it would make an era in the art. It is as ideal as an antique statue, yet as real as any lovely woman whom one meets at a fireside or in the street. But I trust you do not mean to desecrate this exquisite creature with paint, like those staring kings and admirals yonder?"

"Not paint her?" exclaimed Captain Hunnewell, who stood by;—"not paint the figure-head of the Cynosure! And what sort of a figure should I cut in a foreign port, with such an unpainted oaken stick as this over my prow? She must, and she shall, be painted to the life, from the topmost flower in her hat down to the silver spangles on her slippers."

"Mr. Copley," said Drowne, quietly, "I know nothing of marble statuary, and nothing of a sculptor's rules of art. But of this wooden image—this work of my hands—this creature of my heart"—

and here his voice faltered and choked, in a very singular manner—"of this—of her—I may say that I know something. A well-spring of inward wisdom gushed within me, as I wrought upon the oak with my whole strength, and soul, and faith? Let others do what they may with marble, and adopt what rules they choose. If I can produce my desired effect by painted wood, those rules are not for me, and I have a right to disregard them."

"The very spirit of genius!" murmured Copley to himself. "How otherwise should this carver feel himself entitled to transcend all rules, and make me ashamed of quoting them?"

He looked earnestly at Drowne, and again saw that expression of human love which, in a spiritual sense, as the artist could not help imagining, was the secret of the life that had been breathed into this block of wood.

The carver, still in the same secrecy that marked all his operations upon this mysterious image, proceeded to paint the habiliments in their proper colours, and the countenance with nature's red and white. When all was finished, he threw open his workshop, and admitted the townspeople to behold what he had done. Most persons, at their first entrance, felt impelled to remove their hats, and pay such reverence as was due to the richly dressed and beautiful young lady, who seemed to stand in a corner of the room, with oaken chips and shavings scattered at her feet. Then came a sensation of fear; as if, not being actually human, yet so like humanity, she must therefore be something preternatural. There was, in truth, an indefinable air and expression that might reasonably induce the query—who and from what sphere this daughter of the oak should be. The strange rich flowers of Eden on her head; the complexion, so much deeper and more brilliant than those of our native beauties; the foreign, as it seemed, and fantastic garb, yet not too fantastic to be worn decorously in the street; the delicately wrought embroidery of the skirt; the broad gold chain about her neck; the curious ring upon her finger; the fan, so exquisitely sculptured in open work, and painted to resemble pearl and ebony;—where could Drowne, in his sober walk of life, have beheld the vision here so matchlessly embodied! And then her face! In the dark eyes, and around the voluptuous mouth, there played a look made up of pride, coquetry, and a gleam of mirthfulness, which impressed Copley with the idea that the image was secretly enjoying the perplexed admiration of himself and all other beholders.

"And will you," said he to the carver, "permit this master-piece to become the figure-head of a vessel? Give the honest captain yonder figure of Britannia—it will answer his purpose far better,—and send this fairy queen to England, where, for aught I know, it may bring you a thousand pounds."

"I have not wrought it for money," said Drowne. "What sort of a fellow is this?" thought Copley. "A Yankee, and throw away the chance of making his fortune! He has gone mad; and thence has come this gleam of genius."

There was still further proof of Drowne's lunacy, if credit were due to the rumour that he had been seen kneeling at the feet of the oaken lady, and gazing with a lover's passionate ardour into the face that his own hands had created. The bigots of the day hinted that it would be no matter of surprise if an evil spirit were allowed to enter this beautiful form, and seduce the carver to destruction.

The fame of the image spread far and wide. The inhabitants visited it so universally, that, after a few days of exhibition, there was hardly an old man or a child who had not become minutely familiar with its aspect. Had the story of Drowne's wooden image ended here, its celebrity might have been prolonged for many years, by the reminiscences of those who looked upon it in their childhood, and saw nothing else so beautiful in after life. But the town was now to be astonished by an event, the narrative of which has formed itself into one of the most singular legends that are yet to be met with in the traditional chimney-corners of the New England metropolis, where old men and women sit dreaming of the past, and wag their heads at the dreamers of the present and the future.

One fine morning, just before the departure of the *Cynosure* on her second voyage to Fayal, the commander of that gallant vessel was seen to issue from his residence in Hanover street. He was stylishly dressed in a blue broadcloth coat, with gold lace at the seams and button-holes, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, a triangular hat, with a loop and broad binding of gold, and wore a silver-hilted hanger at his side. But the good captain might have been arrayed in the robes of a prince or the rags of a beggar, without in either case attracting notice, while obscured by such a companion as now leaned on his arm. The people in the street started, rubbed their eyes, and either leaped aside from their path, or stood as if transformed to wood or marble with astonishment.

"Do you see it?—do you see it?" cried one, with tremulous eagerness. "It is the very same!"

"The same?" answered another, who had arrived in town only the night before. "What do you mean? I see only a sea-captain in his shore-going clothes, and a young lady in a foreign habit, with a bunch of beautiful flowers in her hat. On my word, she is as fair and bright a damsel as my eyes have looked on this many a day!"

"Yes; the same!—the very same!" repeated the other. "Drowne's wooden image has come to life!"

Here was a miracle indeed! Yet, illuminated by the sunshine, or darkened by the alternate shade of the houses, and with its garments fluttering lightly in the morning breeze, there passed the image along the street. It was exactly and minutely the shape, the garb, and the face, which the townspeople had so recently thronged to see and admire. Not a rich flower upon her head, not a single leaf, but had had its prototype in Drowne's wooden workmanship, although now their fragile grace had become flexible, and was shaken by every footstep that the wearer made. The broad gold chain upon

the neck was identical with the one represented on the image, and glistened with the motion imparted by the rise and fall of the bosom which it decorated. A real diamond sparkled on her finger. In her right hand she bore a pearl and ebony fan, which she flourished with a fantastic and bewitching coquetry, that was likewise expressed in all her movements, as well as in the style of her beauty and the attire that so well harmonized with it. The face, with its brilliant depth of complexion, had the same piquancy of mirthful mischief that was fixed upon the countenance of the image, but which was here varied and continually shifting, yet always essentially the same, like the sunny gleam upon a bubbling fountain. On the whole, there was something so airy and yet so real in the figure, and withal so perfectly did it represent Drowne's image, that people knew not whether to suppose the magic wood etherealized into a spirit, or warmed and softened into an actual woman.

"One thing is certain," muttered a Puritan of the old stamp. "Drowne has sold himself to the devil; and doubtless this gay Captain Hunnewell is a party to the bargain."

"And I," said a young man who overheard him, "would almost consent to be the third victim, for the liberty of saluting those lovely lips."

"And so would I," said Copley the painter, "for the privilege of taking her picture."

The image, or the apparition, whichever it might be, still escorted by the bold captain, proceeded from Hanover street through some of the cross-lanes that make this portion of the town so intricate, to Ann street, thence into Dock-square, and so downward to Drowne's shop, which stood just on the water's edge. The crowd still followed, gathering volume as it rolled along. Never had a modern miracle occurred in such broad daylight, nor in the presence of such a multitude of witnesses. The airy image, as if conscious that she was the object of the murmurs and disturbance that swelled behind her, appeared slightly vexed and flustered, yet still in a manner consistent with the light vivacity and sportive mischief that were written in her countenance. She was observed to flutter her fan with such vehement rapidity, that the elaborate delicacy of its workmanship gave way, and it remained broken in her hand.

Arriving at Drowne's door, while the captain threw it open, the marvellous apparition paused an instant on the threshold, assuming the very attitude of the image, and casting over the crowd that glance of sunny coquetry which all remembered on the face of the oaken lady. She and her cavalier then disappeared.

"Ah!" murmured the crowd, drawing a deep breath, as with one vast pair of lungs.

"The world looks darker, now that she has vanished," said some of the young men.

But the aged, whose recollections dated as far back as witch-times, shook their heads, and hinted that our forefathers would have thought it a pious deed to burn the daughter of the oak with fire.

"If she be other than a bubble of the elements," exclaimed Copley, "I must look upon her face again!"

He accordingly entered the shop; and there, in her usual corner, stood the image, gazing at him, as it might seem, with the very same expression of mirthful mischief that had been the farewell look of the apparition when, but a moment before, she turned her face towards the crowd. The carver stood beside his creation, mending the beautiful fan, which by some accident was broken in her hand. But there was no longer any motion in the life-like image, nor any real woman in the workshop, nor even the witchcraft of a sunny shadow, that might have deluded people's eyes as it flitted along the street. Captain Hunnewell, too, had vanished. His hoarse, sea-breezy tones, however, were audible on the other side of a door that opened upon the water.

"Sit down in the stern sheets, my lady," said the gallant captain. "Come, bear a hand, you lubbers, and set us on board in the turning of a minute-glass."

And then was heard the stroke of oars.

"Drowne," said Copley, with a smile of intelligence, "you have been a truly fortunate man. What painter or statuary ever had such a subject! No wonder that she inspired a genius into you, and first created the artist who afterwards created her image."

Drowne looked at him with a visage that bore the traces of tears, but from which the light of imagination and sensibility, so recently illuminating it, had departed. He was again the mechanical carver that he had been known to be all his life-time.

"I hardly understand what you mean, Mr. Copley," said he, putting his hand to his brow. "This image! Can it have been my work? Well—I have wrought it in a kind of dream; and now that I am broad awake, I must set about finishing yonder figure of Admiral Vernon."

And forthwith he employed himself on the stolid countenance of one of his wooden progeny, and completed it in his own mechanical style, from

which he was never known afterwards to deviate. He followed his business industriously for many years, acquired a competence, and, in the latter part of his life, attained to a dignified station in the church, being remembered in records and traditions as Deacon Drowne, the carver. One of his productions, an Indian chief, gilded all over, stood during the better part of a century on the cupola of the Province House, bedazzling the eyes of those who looked upward, like an angel of the sun. Another work of the good deacon's hand—a reduced likeness of his friend Captain Hunnewell, holding a telescope and quadrant—may be seen, to this day, at the corner of Broad and State Streets, serving in the useful capacity of sign to the shop of a nautical instrument maker. We know not how to account for the inferiority of this quaint old figure, as compared with the recorded excellence of the Oaken Lady, unless on the supposition, that in every human spirit there is imagination, sensibility, creative power, genius, which, according to circumstances, may either be developed in this world, or shrouded in a mask of dulness until another state of being. To our friend Drowne, there came a brief season of excitement, kindled by love. It rendered him a genius for that one occasion, but, being quenched in disappointment, left him again the mechanical carver in wood, without the power even of appreciating the work that his own hands had wrought. Yet who can doubt, that the very highest state to which a human spirit can attain, in its loftiest aspirations, is its truest and most natural state, and that Drowne was more consistent with himself when he wrought the admirable figure of the mysterious lady, than when he perpetrated a whole progeny of blockheads?

There was a rumour in Boston, about this period, that a young Portuguese lady of rank, on some occasion of political or domestic disquietude, had fled from her home in Fayal, and put herself under the protection of Captain Hunnewell, on board of whose vessel, and at whose residence, she was sheltered until a change of affairs. This fair stranger must have been the original of Drowne's Wooden Image.

GENIUS EXEMPT FROM ORDINARY LAWS.

Helfenstein, Ernest

Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book (1844-1848); Feb 1844; 28, American Periodicals
pg. 98

GENIUS EXEMPT FROM ORDINARY LAWS.

BY ERNEST HELFENSTEIN.

TALENT must in all things submit to the laws that be; it hath the power to appreciate, but is incapable of the reach of Genius, of its new-creating faculty. It looks to the external—it anticipates neither change nor progress. It perceiveth that which already binds, but maketh not to itself new and higher and holier laws. Let it therefore be bound down as by adamant to custom, to order; let it render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and leave to Genius to render unto God the things that are God's.

Genius is creative; it is a co-worker with the Eternal. It is the expounder of the 'still small voice' uttered forever in the human heart. It listeth as a meek child to the wind harp, and a strange melody is born of the soul. It is a fresh and holy emanation from the Great First Intelligence. It is the Moses from the mount of God, coming serenely forth from the midst of thunders and thick darkness, bearing the tablets of eternal truth, written by the finger of Truth itself. It may be encompassed by error; in its weakness and bewilderment, it may let the record fall to the earth, that it be broken and marred, yet the hand-writing of God can never be entirely effaced.

It hath a mission to perform; it peopleth the realm of thought, it fostereth the affections, and listeth the mind to communion with the divine; it is mind, and yet above our humanities.

It hath a work to do; yet why should it be compelled to the drudgeries of its art! Why gather the straw for the brick which is to rear the pyramid! Why toil at the midnight lamp, the chisel, or the spade! Why should it not gather reverent disciples in its pathway, and go forth gathering the bread of wisdom, free as the sparrow that is still cared for by the Great Parent, and careless as "the flowers of the field," clothed by him with beauty!

If Genius stampeth its thought by the pen, is there any good reason why it should be compelled to the whole labour of its productions; to give them birth, and put them into shape; to provide the model, and adjust the drapery?

Why should it not be left to the glow of conception? Why is it not enough to have unfolded one new object of beauty; to have called forth one new creation of grace; to have embodied one true and gentle sentiment; one robust and manly passion; one great and glorious thought?

Why should it not strike out its glorious conceptions, and leave to others, if they dare, ay, if they dare to lay their hands upon the Ark of God, leave to others the labour of completing, of perfecting? The process of revision is a deadening one to Genius. If the critics must be appeased, why may not the poet, or the prose artist employ, as the painter does, a pupil to lay colours upon his draft—or like the sculptor, leave the intermediate chiselling to inferior hands? Why may he not, like Jeremy Bentham, employ a Dumont to give shape to his thought? The merit would still be his own; or in case the world should fail to perceive it, and recognize his claims, what matters it? The thought is there; an accession has been received to the fund of human ideas; beauty, or grace, or power, have been brought forth; and the honour of parentage is unthought of in comparison. Genius is content at the enlargement of good; it seeketh not a recompense; it giveth freely, even as it hath received; and thus it learneth meekness and content.

Genius is always enigmatical to other minds. It hath more than they can comprehend, otherwise it would not be genius. It is always in advance of the age, and therefore cannot be understood by those about it. This is a part of its mission. It is a heralder of the light to come; the messenger sent to prepare the way for that which is to come to the world at large. It is sent not for peace, but the sword—to tear asunder the bands of custom, to sever the cords of prejudice, to make room, to lay bare the foundation of the human mind, and teach men that which is within and around them, which they have failed to perceive. It seizeth upon the characteristics of the age, giving to it fixedness and definiteness, and then it imparteth an onward progress.

Slowly and surely the race moveth onward, and men arise who become the interpreters of Genius. They ponder upon its sayings, they enlarge, and search out hidden meanings, and become amazed at the marvellous power, and forethought of him, who perhaps was but little heeded while amid them, but whose simple, and earnest, and true soul, had been able to behold a new heaven, and a new earth.

Thus Fame is born to Genius; but it was not for this that it toiled and lived. Age after age rolls on, till the human mind has reached the point to

which the mind of Genius had impelled it, his thought has become the common thought, and then his words cease to be oracular, and he must give place to another, that must and will arise.

The words of Genius may have been rugged, devoid of the graces of a set form of speech, but from thence it may be they are more impressive. Shakspere speaks not the less powerfully to the heart, that he is deficient in the unities: and spite of the critics, his robust, breathing, living, acting creations sway our sympathies as none others may. We feel their marvellous truth, their marvellous power, their tenderness and beauty, as if they were still acting in our midst. They are not creatures of fancy, but responsible agents, to suffer for their crimes, or be rewarded for their virtues.

By and by we shall learn with Shakspere a more devout humanity. We shall learn to love it, made up, as it must be, of errors and weaknesses, yet redeeming all things by its glowing affections, its generous impulses, its noble self-sacrifices. We shall take it as it is, with much to love, and much to condemn. We shall learn the effectiveness of truth; that it is not her drapery, but her own simple majesty, that we adore. In this way Shakspere comes in aid of the great charities of religion.

Genius hath no spirit of appropriation: it is but the voice of humanity. When it becomes the common thought, its tones are laid away upon musty shelf, unsought, except by the curious in old thoughts! Others become the representatives of a genius, and are remembered with an awe, as the embodiment of one department of human thought. Thus the divine pupil of Socrates has become the impersonation of religious thought, independent of revelation, just as Butler has with that superadded. Then do not care to prize what Washington has written, remarkable as it would be from any other man, because his acted patriotism was more sub-

lime than any written theme. We recoil from the pompous periods of Johnson, yet feel that he himself is but another name for moral truth.

Genius must arise in every age, and in all departments of human thought. Then follow its expounders: meek disciples in the footsteps of their master, patient and beautiful searchers after truth, listening reverently to its utterance, calling its words to remembrance, and blessed in that it is given unto them to interpret parables.

Talk not of the neglect, the poverty, the hardships of Genius! In proportion as it is Genius, it is raised above the caring for these things. It hath that within itself that maketh these "light afflictions." It hath a kingdom elsewhere. Its infirmities are not its own, they are but the incongruities of discordant circumstance. It hath more worlds than one subject to its will. It hath the common world, to which the vision of others is restricted, and it hath beside a vast and peopled empire, more bright and beautiful and true, in which it most delighteth to dwell.

Genius hath its sorrows; deeper, more intense than those of which others dream. Often is it led to pray, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," but even in its agony it meekly addeth, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done."

Genius is humanity in its highest development. Not perfect, but strong humanity; thence hath it infinite yearnings, passions calling for indulgence, affections illimitable. It pictureth a paradise of love, and spreadeth forth its hands for objects to meet its boundless desires. Alas! it graspeth but shadows. It asketh too much from those about it. It seeketh an expansion of being equal to its own. It createth an idol. Will love steal for Genius the spark of the Eternal to breathe into it the breath of life?

THE SOLEMN CELEBRATION.: A HISTORICAL SKETCH.

MISS H F GOULD

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THE SOLEMN CELEBRATION.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH.

BY MISS H. F. GOULD.

It was a great—a momentous day to our country. The storm of her revolution had gathered in its elements. Dark clouds on every side, rolling up from the wrongs of an oppressed people to the skies, had closed at the zenith; and the blackness of our political heavens cast a fearful gloom upon the earth.

Then, on that memorable **NINETEENTH OF APRIL**, the first dread thunderbolt of battle burst suddenly over the plain of Lexington, to leave it irrigated by a crimson shower! The temple of the prince of peace was shaken and shattered by the din of war, and became at once a place of refuge and of ambush to soldiers armed for liberty or death.

He* whose office it was to minister at the sacred altar, looked forth from his dwelling, and saw the way of his quiet walk from his own door to the sanctuary turned into the theatre of a most wondrous and awful tragedy—the infant blades of the early spring grass baptized in the name of freedom with the life-blood of the lambs of his care. And the grass then shooting up throughout the land was not mown till it had carpeted a free soil. That patriotic pastor beheld the first grand sacrifice to American liberty slain from among his own little village flock! And there they lay on the green turf before him; some in the mortal agony, and of others, the yet warm but breathless clay, just left by the spirits which he had laboured to train for Heaven, as they sprang up into the presence of the Lord of Hosts, invoking aid for their struggling country, and appealing with her cause to the high court above, the earliest there in her behalf.

The pale remains of these magnanimous soldier patriots were hastily borne from the field of their martyrdom by their sorrowing friends, and with no other shroud than the gory garments in which they died, laid side by side in one rude receptacle; and thus cemented together by their clotted life-streams, as their hearts had been by the cause in which they were poured out, committed to a common grave. There, shoulder to shoulder, as they had stood in battle, they slept undisturbed through the lapse of three-score years. They sighed no more for liberty—no more they heard the clang of arms or the groans of their dying brethren. They heard not the shout of freedom as it rent the air, nor the sound of the sword being beaten into the plough-share, and the spear to the pruning-hook, in their beloved land. They saw not how proudly and how

* The Rev. Mr. Clarke.

fondly a vigorous young American eagle was hanging in the blue ether deep above their bed of earth, with his warm plumy breast to them, his eye drinking at the sun, and his wings outspread to span the globe.

A few years ago these remains were exhumed, to be, on the sixtieth anniversary of the battle, entombed with military honours, in a vault—a new tomb prepared for them by the inhabitants of Lexington, beneath a monument which marks the spot where they fell. They were gathered into one rich sarcophagus, inscribed with all their names, and, taking a long leave of their open grave, borne with solemn pomp from beside it in the cemetery to the church hard by, with Columbia's star-spangled banner spread over them for the first—the last time, and there placed in the aisle, before a great cloud of witnesses raining tears at the affecting sight.

Never before did mortal remains return from the dark chambers of the dead into the light of day with so truly pious and magnificent a welcome, or to occasion such a tide of new and powerful emotion as suddenly overwhelmed every heart in that immense assembly, on beholding these lugubrious evidences come back, after sixty years' repose, to attest to the longing, the sighing, the burning desire of the spirits that once animated them for the rights which they never obtained.

Yet it was not mourning—it was not sorrow, nor pain from sympathy with present or recent suffering, that melted the beholders. It was a mysterious, irresistible power, penetrating every breast with a deep, realizing sense never felt before, of the price of peril, agony and life, at which the blessings of freedom were purchased by our fathers for our inheritance. It was a feeling to which not a bosom in the throng had till that moment known itself susceptible. The occasion was unique in the world's annals, and the emotions it caused no less so. The effect of these honoured relics on that grand body of people was wondrous, almost as that produced by the bones of the Prophet of Israel on the body of the young man that touched them as it lowered into his sepulchre. They reanimated the material form, so that it rose up and stood upon its feet. But these touched the soul of the beholder, infusing, as it were, a new life and power of perception, and bringing over it a solemnity in view of the rights which our fathers sighed and toiled for, and which we may have but too thoughtlessly possessed. There seemed, throughout the crowd, almost

a general suspension of breath, as if they had simultaneously imagined the air which we so freely breathe meted out to our ancestors by weight and measure. The presence of these mouldering remains enkindled in the hearts of the spectators a lively gratitude towards those valiant men who achieved our independence, the more intensely glowing, as it now seemed almost too late to bestow it this side of the invisible world. It must be directed, with scarce an earthly medium, to that all-wise Being who has taken to himself so many to whom it was due; that of all that noble army of patriot heroes, we see now only a thin and faded remnant—a few white-haired, trembling, weary pilgrims, lingering here and there, feeble and solitary, on the bleak shore of time, awaiting the barge that is to convey them home.

A small number of these, and some who had belonged to the same company with the fallen in the battle of Lexington, were present at the solemn celebration—each bearing on his breast a badge of that company which had been so closely bound together by the one great cause, when those bosoms were warmed by the fire of youth.

As they tottered near, and their aged eyes looked darkly on their brethren in the coffin, they remembered how they once—how they last had seen them; and, contrasting that day with this, almost ready to cry with the voice in the valley of vision—*Can these dry bones live?*—they, in spirit, turned away the sight from earth and ashes, blessing the promise and the author of a more glorious resurrection.

The funeral oration pronounced over those revered relics before that dignified audience, was by one wisely chosen and well qualified for an occasion so great, so deeply interesting and affecting as no man ever addressed an assembly on before, and none could ever again. While every ear of the vast multitude hung on the eloquent lips of EDWARD

EVERETT, and every heart felt itself melting at the pathetic story he was telling in his own peculiar, thrilling accents, or enlarged and elevated by the high-toned sentiments he was uttering, so death-like was the stillness of the house, you could almost hear the drop of the soldier's tear on his glittering armour, as he listened and looked, and beholding what was near him in the aisle, realized that it was for no vain pageant or empty show that he and his company were equipped in military array.

The half-stifled sob of the statesman, too, was detected through the reigning stillness that betrayed the bosom it was shaking, while he considered the sacredness of the charge committed to his trust—the great duties of his office, and viewed himself as a high-priest in the temple of our liberty, with the ark of a nation's rights to protect from the touch of profane or unclean hands.

But the orator had done. The dirge was sung; the benediction was pronounced. The people moved—

As a rich, rare casket filled with gold
And pearls and precious stones,
They took up the coffin dim and cold
With the soldiers' names and bones.

Then slowly forth to the battle-ground,
While every mouth was dumb,
They moved to the mournful music's sound
And the beat of the muffled drum.

They reached the place for the honoured dead,
The proudest and the best—
The earth that had been their dying bed,
Prepared for their final rest.

Those relics dark from the light they lowered,
Where the bleeding warriors fell,
And volleys three o'er the tomb they poured—
'Twas the soldier's long farewell.